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Assembly California Legislature

JOHN LAIRD
ASSEMBLY MEMBER, TWENTY SEVENTH DISTRICT

COMMITTEES
Chair, BUDGET
JUDICIARY
LABOR & EMPLOYMENT
NATURAL RESOURCES

May 16, 2008

Doug Bosco, Chair
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Chairperson Bosco,

I am writing to convey my full support for the Big Sur Land Trust's Lower Carmel River Floodplain Restoration project, and to encourage approval of their grant request.

In 1995 and 1998, the communities of Carmel and Big Sur were severely impacted by floods. The Lower Carmel River Floodplain Restoration project will help to prevent the impacts of these types of events by enhancing flood protection and mitigating public safety issues associated with Highway 1 closures. The project will also aid restoration of vital habitat and associated threatened species of the Carmel River, including federally protected steelhead trout.

The Conservancy's grant will support important design and engineering work, which will help complete the final restoration design for the entire floodplain of the Carmel River. Conservancy funding will be complemented by federal funds already secured through the US Environmental Protection Agency's West Coast Estuaries Initiative.

During my time in the Assembly, the Big Sur Land Trust has regularly updated me on its efforts, and I am confident this project will be a success. For these reasons, I fully support their grant request.

Sincerely,



JOHN LAIRD, Assemblymember
27th District

JL:cf

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

50 HIGUERA STREET
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93401-5415
PHONE (805) 549-3101
FAX (805) 549-3329
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<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/>



*Flex your power!
Be energy efficient!*

May 30, 2008

Douglas Bosco
Chairman
California Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

LETTER OF SUPPORT - LOWER CARMEL RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT PLANNING

Dear Chairman Bosco:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 5 is pleased to provide this letter of support for the Big Sur Land Trust's application for funding to continue project planning for the Lower Carmel River Restoration Project.

Caltrans District 5 supports the project continuing into the design and engineering phase, possible with the assistance of grant funds from the Coastal Conservancy. District 5 has assigned staff to the project and has participated in several project planning sessions. We have completed our initial review of the project's elements, including the proposed causeway at Highway 1, and Minor A funding of \$1 million has been tentatively identified toward the project's construction.

We appreciate your support of the project and its necessary elements to provide enhanced habitat and flood protection in the lower Carmel River.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard Krumholz".

RICHARD KRUMHOLZ
District Director

MONTEREY COUNTY

WATER RESOURCES AGENCY

PO BOX 930
SALINAS, CA 93902
(831) 755-4860
FAX (831) 424-7935

November 16, 2007

CURTIS V. WEEKS
GENERAL MANAGER

STREET ADDRESS
893 BLANCO CIRCLE
SALINAS, CA 93901-4455

Dan Pingaro
West Coast Estuaries Initiative – California
U.S. EPA Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street (WTR-3)
San Francisco, CA 94105

RE: Letter of Support for Big Sur Land Trust Carmel River Floodplain Restoration Project

Dear Mr. Pingaro,

I am writing to express support for the Big Sur Land Trust's proposal for the Carmel River Floodplain Restoration project submitted to your West Coast Estuaries Initiative grant program. The Carmel River is an important watershed in Monterey County and has been the focus of a community driven watershed action plan process as well as coordinated efforts for restoring and managing the river and its habitats. In addition the Carmel River Floodplain Restoration Project has been identified as a priority project in the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) for the Monterey Peninsula, Carmel Bay, and South Monterey Bay Region.

Our Agency administers the National Flood Insurance Program in Monterey County and has advocated and worked to improve flood protection in the lower Carmel River for a number of years. We have been active participants on a multi-agency Technical Advisory Committee which developed the Study Plan for Long Term Adaptive Management of the Carmel River State Beach and Lagoon. This proposed project is not merely consistent with our objectives. We consider it a keystone multi-objective project with flood prevention benefits that we do not have resources to accomplish by ourselves.

The proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to protect and restore the aquatic and riparian habitats of the Carmel River. We have and will continue to provide staff resources to further this project, some of which we believe will qualify as in-kind match. Additionally, we have helped obtain additional financial resources to support this project. We continue to work with the Land Trust and other partners to bring complementary resources to the Lower Carmel River and Lagoon. We hope you will support this collaborative effort with funding from your program.

Sincerely,



William L. Phillips, AICP
Deputy General Manager



MONTEREY PENINSULA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

5 HARRIS COURT, BLDG. G
POST OFFICE BOX 85
MONTEREY, CA 93942-0085 • (831) 658-5600
FAX (831) 644-9560 • <http://www.mpwmd.dst.ca.us>

November 15, 2007

Dan Pingaro
West Coast Estuaries Initiative – California
U.S. EPA Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street (WTR-3)
San Francisco, CA 94105

**Subject: MPWMD Support for Big Sur Land Trust Carmel River Floodplain
Restoration Project**

Dear Mr. Pingaro:

I am writing to express support for the Big Sur Land Trust (BSLT) proposal for the Carmel River Floodplain Restoration Project submitted to your West Coast Estuaries Initiative grant program. The Carmel River is an important watershed in Monterey County and has been the focus of a community-driven watershed action plan process as well as coordinated efforts for restoring and managing the river and its habitats. It should be noted that the BSLT's Carmel River Floodplain Restoration Project was identified as the highest priority project in the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) for the Monterey Peninsula, Carmel Bay, and South Monterey Bay Region. The BSLT is one of five entities that form the IRWMP's regional management group. The IRWMP seeks to coordinate the actions of more than 30 stakeholder entities involved in water resource protection, enhancement, and management in the planning region.

For more than 30 years, the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District (MPWMD, or District) has carried out water resources management in the lower portion of the Carmel River watershed. In the early 1980's, the District implemented several programs designed to sustain healthy riparian vegetation and a viable steelhead fishery, and to maintain the bed and banks of Carmel River. Between 1986 and 2001, riparian wooded areas within the streamside corridor in the lower 19 miles of the river increased from an estimated 299 acres to an estimated 438 acres. This increase is due both to natural recovery after an episode of bank erosion between 1978 and 1986 and to restoration work by a variety of groups working together in the watershed. MPWMD sponsors such projects and provides technical assistance to other project sponsors as part of its program to mitigate for damage to the environment as a result of water extraction practices.

The project proposed by the BSLT is part of a comprehensive effort to protect and restore the

Dan Pingaro
November 15, 2007
Page 2

aquatic and riparian habitats of the Carmel River. I hope you will support this collaborative effort with funding from your program.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. If you have questions about this letter, please contact Larry Hampson, MPWMD Water Resources Engineer, in the Carmel Valley field office at (831) 659-2543.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DA Berger", written over a horizontal line.

David A. Berger
General Manager

cc: Donna Meyers, Big Sur Land Trust

CSA #50

“Flood Control for the Lower Carmel River”

Mission Fields - Crossroads Area - Arroyo Carmel - Riverwood

November 14, 2007

Mr. Dan Pingaro
West Coast Estuaries Initiative – California
U.S. EPA Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street (WTR-3)
San Francisco, CA 94105

RE: Letter of Support for Big Sur Land Trust Carmel River Floodplain Restoration Project

Dear Mr. Pingaro,

I am writing to express the support of Monterey County’s County Service Area #50 for the Big Sur Land Trust’s proposal for the Carmel River Floodplain Restoration project, submitted to your West Coast Estuaries Initiative grant program. The Carmel River is an important watershed in Monterey County and has been the focus of many efforts over the last ten years or more to address flood issues, habitat degradation and improvements for endangered species. We residents in the community have been actively engaged in trying to restore the Carmel River, as well as protect our homes and businesses from flooding.

County Service Area #50 is a resident-driven body dedicated to flood protection for our neighborhoods, which are located within the 100-year flood plain on the north bank of the Carmel River. This area has been subject to flooding historically, most recently in 1995, when the area endured significant flooding in January, and then again two months later in March, causing many tens of millions of dollars in both public and private property damage, as well as great personal trauma to families and business owners and employees. CSA #50 was developed immediately after those floods, with the purpose of seeking 100-year flood protection for our area. We are officially an affiliate of the Monterey County Department of Public Works, also working hand-in-hand with the Monterey County Water Resources Agency, and collaborating with various public and private partners, including the Big Sur Land Trust. There are approximately 400 residences and several dozen retail and service businesses within CSA #50.

For twelve years now, we residents and businesses have been assessing ourselves for this flood control work, \$222.22 per year assessment for each single family home in the Mission Fields neighborhood, varying amounts more or less than that for apartment dwellings and business properties. The total annual income of CSA #50 is only approximately \$128,000, enabling us to maintain local levees and drainage ditches, to undertake very modest projects and repairs, to conduct studies to move local flood control projects forward, and to strategically provide local match for grants and investments that contribute to flood control.

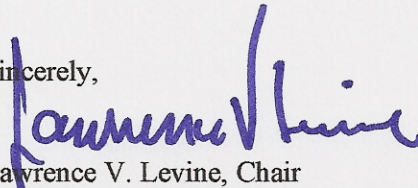
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One of the key areas for flood protection of our neighborhoods is the property commonly known as "Odello East" on the south bank of the Carmel River, named for the family that farmed it for many years. In 1996, CSA #50 funds were used to notch the levee along that property to create a floodway; in 1997 our funds paid for engineering and county supervision of a project to armor the key notch at the east end of the property, enabled by a grant from CalTrans. Since that time we have paid for technical studies related to flood control planning, with the Odello East property always playing a critical role in any project to be considered. Most recently we allocated up to \$34,000 to cover costs related to a Big Sur Land Trust hydrology study of the Carmel River and the Odello East property, to move flood control and other environmental land uses forward.

The Big Sur Land Trust's proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to protect and improve flood protection along the river while also enhancing habitat. Their efforts are assisting in solving these very real issues for our community. We of CSA #50 certainly need and value this work. We hope you will support this collaborative effort with funding from your program, and we stand ready to consider ways that we and our residents can assist, within our limited financial resources.

Thank you for your consideration of this project.

Sincerely,



Lawrence V. Levine, Chair
CSA #50 Advisory Committee
P.O. Box 222182
Carmel, CA 93922
831-625-9414
farflung@redshift.com

Dan Pingaro
West Coast Estuaries Initiative – California
U.S. EPA Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street (WTR-3)
San Francisco, CA 94105

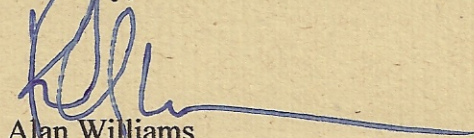
RE: Letter of Support for Big Sur Land Trust Carmel River Floodplain Restoration Project

Dear Mr. Pingaro,

The Big Sur Land Trust has submitted a grant request for the Carmel River Floodplain Restoration Project under the EPA West Coast Estuaries Initiative grant program. I am writing to request your support for this important project. As the landowner adjacent to the Big Sur Land Trust property on the floodplain we are supportive of the restoration proposal and it is our intent to donate this land for the project. This land is valued at over \$1 million dollars.

The communities of Carmel and Big Sur were greatly impacted by the devastating floods of 1995 and 1998 and we have worked as a community to develop a solution to the flooding while at the same time want to benefit the environment. The Carmel River watershed is greatly compromised and a coordinated effort for restoration is needed. We believe that this project has multiple benefits to restoring habitat, reducing flood risk, and improving watershed condition. It has taken the community several years to complete the necessary analysis to develop the project to this point and we would appreciate your support of this project at the crucial phases of final project design and beginning project construction. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alan Williams', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alan Williams
Agent, Coast Ranch
P.O. Box 450
Carmel, CA. 93921